

The treatment of gifted children

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Gifted students are being treated unfairly. They aren't getting as much attention as learning-disabled students. I believe they should be treated the same as other students with special needs. First, I think the government should support gifted and learning-disabled students equally. In the No Child left Behind Act, or NCLB, some schools are only funded for core subjects. As a result, schools may only focus on achieving acceptable skill levels in reading, writing, and math.

All of the other programs that the government is not requiring (like gifted programs) are being cut by many schools because there is not enough money. Also, since the NCLB doesn't have a set standard for assessment, states can choose their own tests as long as everyone in the state takes the same one. Some states are even lowering their standards so it looks like their students are improving because the NCLB gives bonuses to schools that improve their scores on the assessments. The NCLB also tries to improve the bottom of the education spectrum rather than the top, which I think is wrong. Bob Thorton, a writer, once wrote, " Instead of emphasizing strengthening the opportunities open to the able, we have tended increasingly to shift into a state of victims in which the emphasis is on raising the people at the bottom. Now, no social progress has ever come from the bottom up.

It's always come from the top small number pulling up the society as a whole and raising it." This proves that our society has always been pulled up by the people on top, not pushed forward by people on the bottom. The president of the Pennsylvania Association of Gifted Education, or PAGE, says in an editorial that she thinks the NCLB might mean " No Child Gets Ahead" for gifted students because the NCLB forces gifted students to sit and wait for

their peers to catch up rather than challenging them, learning, and increasing their abilities. Lastly, I believe that the No Child Left Behind Act is wrong plan for education in the United States. If anything, gifted students should be given as much a chance to learn as someone who is learning-disabled.

Second, I also think that gifted students should be able to learn things that challenge them. Going back to the NCLB, the government has absolutely no plan for students that ace the assessments. They treat someone who is able to pass the assessments the same as someone who annihilates them and finishes them with ease. They expect that gifted students will always excel but this is wrong. Many gifted students lose the giftedness because they are not educated properly. Also, if gifted students are not challenged they will become bored and they may accept being normal which might ruin their chances for a good career.

They might also choose not to go to college because they expecting the same things they did in school. One thing that may challenge them is a gifted program but there are not many out there for several reasons: they are usually the first programs cut from the curriculum and some administrators think that special programs may send a message to other children telling them that they are not as smart. Gifted programs are usually cut first because they have the least amount of funding. An interesting fact is that gifted and talented programs usually receive one tenth of a percent of federal education money but disadvantaged and handicapped programs usually receive nearly eighty-five percent of it. This shows that gifted

students should be provided with equal resources as other special education fields so they can be challenged and learn effectively.

Gifted students should also be given opportunity to skip grades if their parents believe they should. Most people think that skipping a grade is bad for the student. In most cases, gifted kids do better. They are usually socially accepted and easily make friends. This is because gifted students are usually more mature than their peers and tend to want to hang out with people at their maturity level. I think that skipping a grade or two will not do much damage.

If you skip more than two grades you may experience some of the negative effects. Imagine, you would probably be one of the smallest people in your grade and you probably wouldn't do well in physical education classes. Overall it is a decision to be made by the parents, the students, and the school. Thirdly, some teachers believe participating in a gifted program is a privilege. They believe if a student misbehaves he or she should not participate in a gifted program.

They also believe that if a student acts up or disrupts a class they shouldn't be able to participate in a gifted program either. Although some teachers believe this is true, I believe this is wrong. Attending a gifted program is a need, not a privilege! Some gifted children may misbehave because they are bored. Attending a gifted program will challenge gifted children and they would be less likely to misbehave, act up, or disrupt the classroom. It will stimulate and challenge them and make them more interested in school.

In many ways gifted students are getting the short end of the stick. I believe gifted students have less support, funding, attention than learning-disabled children. They are always viewed as the minority. We need to end this discrimination and create a new educational system for our country.